

## Author of Duxbury Beach Book Shares Her Passion

By DANIEL DI CENSO

The beauty, the fragility, and the importance of Duxbury Beach will all be captured in the soon-to-be-released *Duxbury Beach Book*, a tribute to the town's beloved shoreline.

Margaret Kearney, a Duxbury native who has been a trustee of the Duxbury Beach Reservation for close to 20 years, has been credited as being the motivating force behind the production of the book besides compiling and editing material.

"For the last several years I've been wanting to do this," Kearney said. "When I retired from Houghton Mifflin in Boston in late 2004, I knew I was going to get a chance to do this book."

Kearney gathered many trustees in the Reservation Committee and realized the distinct talent of each.

"We also got David Clapp, the recently retired director of the Southeast Mass Audubon, to write about the wildlife," said Kearney. "We wanted to begin the book with the geology of the beach, so we got one of the trustees, James O'Connell, who is a geologist, to write the first chapter."

The production process of this book took two and a half years.

"The first year was spent just talking about what would go into the book and, more importantly, what couldn't be included. There was no end to material," she said.

Kay Foster, a member of the Duxbury Beach Reservation and author of two chapters in the book, said that for someone who was never involved in the production of a book, this was a great learning experience. "I really enjoyed digging through the historical records and getting loose in the library. Frederick Pratt, who bought the beach in 1919, and was then helped by his son Frederick P. Pratt, kept meticulous records and had a very organized way of maintaining them."

Kearney said that there were many factors motivating her and the other trustees in writing this book.

"The major motivation is that people come and go in this town without understanding who owns the beach and the relationship between the town and the beach reservation. I feel that a lot of people don't understand why we need to restrict vehicles during the piping plover nesting season."

The tiny coastal birds lay their eggs in the cobbled rocks of the shoreline. Their size and coloring make them hard to see among the rocks, and they can easily be stepped on as is illustrated in the book.

"The second reason is because no one had ever done a book on Duxbury Beach before." The book also covers islands that are part of Plymouth and Kingston.

"We decided to include them because the only way to get to them is through Duxbury," Kearney said.

As an additional benefit, Kearney said, the book will help gain money for storm repairs. "We never have enough money to

do all we need to do to repair after storms. All profits will go to the storm fund."

Kearney also commended the community for their input towards the book, calling the finished project a "group effort."

Kearney said that only the book's designer and cover photographer were paid; the rest of the work and photographs were donated.

Explaining about the organization that put together the book, Kearney said, "The Duxbury Beach Reservation is a non-profit Mass trust that owns the beach. People need to understand the spirited cooperation between the town and management."

The book is filled with photographs of the local wildlife and the beach's past.

"I am very pleased with the wildlife photographs," Kearney said. "It looks like an Audubon book, and they were all taken here at Duxbury Beach."

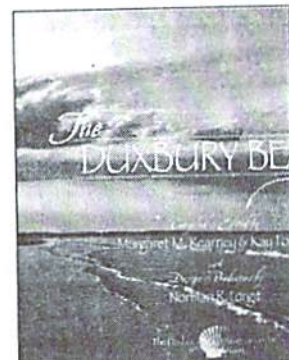
There is also a timeline running through the book that runs from the late 1600s to 2002, which covers events that had a significant impact on the beach. There are also sidebars containing additional facts about the beach.

"My passion for the beach is what really made me want to write this book," Kearney said. "Especially because I can see its fragility."

Kearney had many goals with this book and she summed them up as "educating the public, raising funds, and doing something no one had ever done before."

"To tell you the truth," Kearney said, "the book came out better than I thought it would. Its text is as good as its photographs."

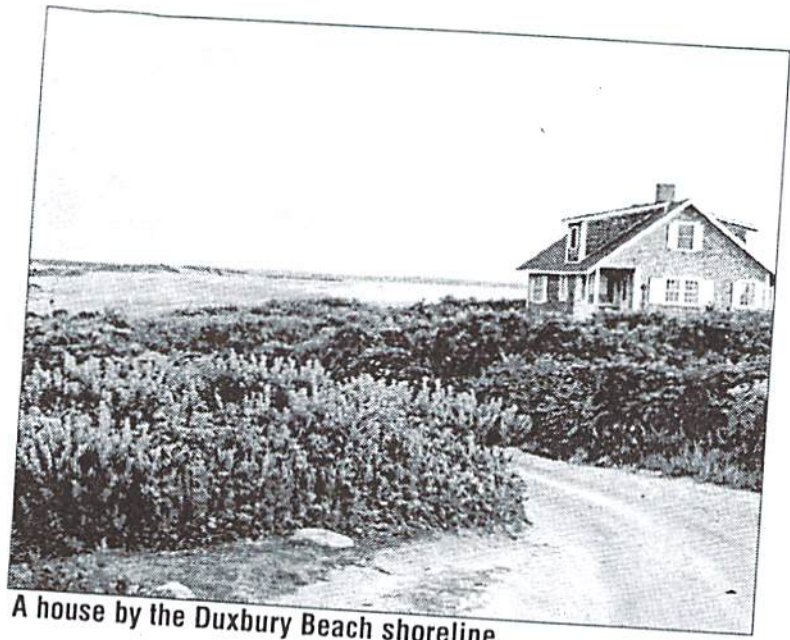
The *Duxbury Beach Book* will be sold at Westwinds Bookshop for \$50 and will be preceded by a public reception at the Duxbury Senior Center on Sunday May 6, from 4 to 6 p.m. The authors will be there to sign copies.



The cover of the book.



The shoreline illustration in the book.



A house by the Duxbury Beach shoreline.